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Security Council

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Wednesday, 20 September 2006, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Bakoyannis	(Greece)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Taiana
	China	Mr. Li Zhaoxing
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	Denmark	Mr. Moeller
	France	Mr. Douste-Blazy
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Peru	Mr. Belaunde
	Qatar	Sheikh Al-Thani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovakia	Mr. Kubiš
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Howells
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Migiro
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Letter dated 6 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2006/719)

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06-52873 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Letter dated 6 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2006/719)

The President: As agreed in prior consultations, the Security Council is pleased to invite His Excellency Mr. Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania, to participate in this meeting in accordance with rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure.

As agreed in prior consultations, the Security Council is pleased to invite the following representatives of regional organizations to participate in this meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure: Mr. Erkki Tuomioja, representing the Presidency of the European Union; Mr. José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States; Mr. Lauro L. Baja, Chairman of the New York Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States; Mr. Karel de Gucht, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; Mr. Vladimir Rushaylo, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States; Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference; Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Mr. Nikolai Bordyuzha, Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization; and Mr. Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in the course of its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/590, which contains the report of the Secretary-General entitled "A regional-global security partnership: challenges and opportunities".

I should also like to draw the Council's attention to document S/2006/719, which contains a letter dated 6 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Greece addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a background paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to welcome the presence at this meeting of Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Allow me to open this debate with the following introduction in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece.

First of all, I wish to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for his presence here today. We greatly appreciate his tireless efforts to bring increasing significance to the issue of the relationship and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining peace and security. We fully share his stated vision of a mutually reinforcing regional-global mechanism for peace and security, which, in our view, will prove critical to effectively addressing future threats and security challenges in the twenty-first century. We strongly urge the next Secretary-General to continue those efforts and to further strengthen that partnership.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the representatives of regional organizations for being here today to share with us their views and experiences on this most important subject.

This debate provides a good opportunity to discuss the developments that have taken place recently in implementing resolution 1631 (2005), which was adopted last year under Romania's presidency of the Council. But most importantly, this meeting can stimulate an interesting discussion on the vision of creating a regional-global security mechanism. The report of the Secretary-General in response to resolution 1631 (2005) identifies challenges and opportunities to make the relationship with regional organizations more effective, and paves the way for the construction of a mechanism that will enable the world community to handle future threats and challenges in a more consistent and coordinated way. For our part, we would like to raise three issues that are relevant to the findings and recommendations of the report.

First, in previous Security Council debates it was recognized that, given the nature of the new security threats, greater involvement by international organizations in conflict prevention and management, in cooperation with the Council, was required. We fully subscribe to that position. We believe that a greater role by regional agencies in the area of peace and security would not only lessen the burden of the Security Council in that field, but it would also increase the legitimacy of the Council through more balanced input into its decisions and deliberations from various regions with different cultural, religious and historical backgrounds.

Secondly, many important developments have taken place in this regard, particularly through the Secretary-General's convening of six high-level meetings that have been marked by a high level of attendance and [a] broadened substantive agenda. The meetings have identified an important set of modalities for cooperation on conflict prevention and for guiding principles in the area of peacebuilding. It is now important to ensure that there is more effective implementation of those principles in close coordination between the United Nations and international organizations.

For its part, the Security Council has conducted its own meetings with regional organizations and has developed an enhanced relationship with regional and subregional organizations, focusing on peace and security challenges such as conflict prevention and management, peacebuilding and counter-terrorism.

However, despite those developments, many challenges remain to be addressed to make this relationship more substantive and operational. While Chapter VIII of the Charter refers to regional agencies and arrangements and sets forth the functional relationship with the Security Council — in Articles 52 and 53 — it is silent with regard to their constitutional relationship with the Security Council. We believe that the time has come for greater clarity as regards a series of issues that will facilitate the shaping of the vision of a global-regional mechanism for peace and security agreed by both the Security Council and the regional organizations.

We need to identify regional and subregional agencies and to clarify the criteria on the basis upon which those agencies are distinguished, for the purpose of applying Chapter VIII of the Charter, from other international organizations. Such clarity will give real meaning to the envisaged global-regional mechanism, and should restore more authority to the Security Council and greater reliance on constitutionally delegated executive functions to genuine regional agencies under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

The importance of this issue has been identified in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/590), prepared in response to resolution 1631 (2005), which emphasizes the need to clarify both the membership and the mandate of regional and other organizations, to make coordination more effective and ensure a clearer collective effort. We endorse his recommendations on that issue. In that respect, we have suggested in our concept paper some basic elements to be applied for the potential identification of regional and other organizations. We also support all other recommendations contained in the report.

In conclusion, I would like to express our full support for all the efforts aiming at building the capacity of regional and other organizations. The United Nations and Member States should promote the capacity-building of those organizations through the provision of human, technical and financial assistance if they really wish to develop an effective partnership. In that respect, the seventh high-level meeting that will take place immediately after this meeting, to which I have been invited as President of the Council to report on the findings and decisions of the Council, will focus on the implementation of the 10-year process of sustained capacity-building for African regional and subregional organizations. We are looking forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations contribution to that effect, in accordance with the World Summit Declaration.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: I pay tribute to the delegation of Greece and to you in particular, Madam Foreign Minister, for convening this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. The fact that the Security Council has met twice on this issue in as many years shows the importance it rightly attaches to it.

Last October, in its first resolution on the subject, resolution 1631 (2005), the Council expressed its determination to further this cooperation, and asked me to report on the challenges and opportunities in this area. My report is now before the Council in document S/2006/590, and I am pleased to have this chance to supplement it with some further thoughts.

It is now 14 years since the Council invited my predecessor to submit recommendations for strengthening the United Nations in the field of international peace and security, including our collaboration with regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter. Since then, my predecessor and I have convened six high-level meetings with the heads of partner organizations. A seventh, as the Council has heard from the President, is to be held shortly.

Those meetings are helping to build a common forum and an agenda of cooperation. The partnership is stronger today than in the early 1990s; many of the regional and subregional partners themselves are stronger; our interaction is more intense, substantial and meaningful. This year alone, our political and operational collaboration has included: cooperation with the African Union's peacekeeping operation in the Sudan; cooperation with the European Union in support of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and ongoing partnerships with the Economic Community Of West African States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Afghanistan and Kosovo, and the Organization of American States in support of Haiti's electoral process.

We are also engaged in regular consultations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States on conflict resolution in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Our mediation and other efforts include partnerships with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Somalia and Sudan, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Cambodia, Myanmar and Timor-Leste, the International Organization of La Francophonie in the Central African Republic, and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries in Guinea-Bissau.

That is just a sample of the wide-ranging policy and operational activities that are taking place. Those diverse experiences span conflict-prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace building. They are delivering results on the ground, as well as lessons for the future.

We have a better sense today of our respective strengths and advantages. The political engagement of regional actors is improving our knowledge of specific situations. Their military and peacekeeping capacities have made it possible to respond more quickly at the outset of a crisis and at key moments. Their resources are proving to be a linchpin of post-conflict peace building. My report contains specific suggestions for building on this growing knowledge of each other's strengths.

Much as we have strengthened our capacities over the years, it is essential that we do even more. The 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union is making progress, primarily because it has brought together, with a great sense of purpose, all relevant regional and subregional, in-area and out-of-area actors. With that example in mind, my report sets out a number of concrete recommendations for furthering this and other capacity-building efforts.

We sometimes forget how quickly our world evolves. Not too long ago, the idea of more than 90,000 United Nations peacekeepers in the field, of an African standby force, or of a European Union police mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was unthinkable. They are reality today.

Likewise, the breadth of our involvement in mediation efforts, the growing awareness of the fragility of post-conflict situations and the increased emphasis on prevention have also been major features in our work. The reality of the next decade is that the demand for peacekeeping and these other services will continue to grow and we must be ready.

That means the time has come for us to take the regional-global partnership to a new level of clarity, practicality and seriousness. Chapter VIII exists for reasons that are as valid today as they were 61 years ago. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations offers a framework for doing this with the requisite flexibility, accountability and legitimacy. I welcome, therefore, the deepening engagement of regional organizations in United Nations efforts for peace and security, and urge us all to continue to keep thinking of new ways — new ways to our cooperation and to the creation of a global collective security mechanism that protects people and lays the groundwork for lasting peace.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached among the Council members, I wish to remind all the speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking to the Chamber. I shall give the floor now to His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al-Thani, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar.

Sheikh Al-Thani (Qatar) *(spoke in Arabic)*: At the outset, Madam President, let me express our appreciation for the outstanding performance of Greece, your friendly country, in its tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and for the constructive work it has been undertaking in the fulfilment of the purposes and principles aimed at the maintenance of international peace and security.

Our thanks go also to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for the tireless efforts he has been making in the context of enhancing the partnership between the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and other international organizations in the interest of achieving lasting peace and security.

Madam President, from your ancestors, the ancient Greeks, we learned the meaning of the word "democracy", meaning the rule of the people. It is a word that connotes the objective of the advancement of humanity. It is therefore no surprise to witness today the manifestation of your desire to develop a more effective partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with a view to promoting democracy in international affairs.

We, the peoples of the United Nations, have underscored in our Charter, which we all have accepted as our ultimate authority, our desire to achieve peace and security. Convinced as we are of the importance of coordinated action in this great international Organization, we have established regional and subregional alliances as well as broader international political arrangements based on shared political and economic orientations in order to strengthen the foundations of sustainable peace and security.

That is only natural in a diversified world of escalating tensions. Consolidating a collective approach in which security issues are dealt with by the United Nations and regional organizations contributes to the promotion of peace and security, especially in the light of the leading role that can be played by regional and subregional organizations in the area of peacemaking, since they are better placed to determine the best way of dealing with conflicts in their own regions. This has prompted the United Nations to accord greater interest to enhancing a relationship of partnership between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and to consider the development of a common vision of a global structure in which capacities complement each other on the basis of comparative advantages and a clear division of labour.

The activities undertaken by the regional organizations must be accorded due importance in the United Nations, particularly if we take into account the role played by such regional organizations. Such a role is presumed to be the strongest link between the national and international levels in the context of collective action aimed at developing specific concepts that all States Members of the United Nations can abide by. It is to be noted that interaction between the United Nations and a particular regional organization strengthens the role played by that organization in its regional context and vice versa.

While it is axiomatic that the basis for human welfare in different regions may be similar in principle, at the same time different approaches are required in dealing with each situation according to its own specificities. There is no doubt that the cooperation and partnership that are beginning to emerge between the United Nations, especially the Security Council, and the African Union represents the strongest evidence of the great potential that can be tapped by this kind of cooperation as well as the great advantage to be gained in the maintenance of sustainable peace and security. We believe that the recent historic visit by a Security Council delegation to the African Union Commission provides further impetus for modalities of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

However, there remain major, often politically motivated distortions that result in the application of double standards in dealing with various conflicts and the regional organizations that could play a constructive role in such conflicts. This causes a certain imbalance between global collective security and regional collective security. The unstable situation

in our Arab region is but proof of this imbalance, which must urgently be corrected.

It is our view that the United Nations has a great capacity to achieve the lofty objective of a partnership that would reflect equally and fairly the concerns and preoccupations of the various regional organizations, in pursuit of the greater objective of such a partnership.

Madam President, in conclusion, we would like to assure you of our support for the draft presidential statement to be adopted at the end of this meeting. Allow us to extend our best wishes for the success of the seventh high-level meeting between the United Nations, the regional organizations and other intergovernmental organizations, scheduled to begin its work soon.

The President: I call on Mr. Li Zhaoxing, Minister for Foreign Affairs of China.

Mr. Li Zhaoxing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Madam President, I am very pleased to see you presiding over today's meeting, and I wish to congratulate Greece on the outstanding job it has done since assuming the presidency of the Security Council.

The United Nations is the core of the international collective security mechanism, and the Security Council shoulders the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. At a time when the security interests of countries are increasingly inter-connected in the face of growing global security threats, China supports enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations with a view to safeguarding international peace and security.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan recently submitted his report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. China in principle endorses the analyses and recommendations presented in the report, and supports the development of an effective global partnership. In that regard, I wish to make three points.

First, it is important for all bodies involved to complement each other's efforts and enhance coordination among them. China welcomes the contribution of regional and subregional organizations to the maintenance of peace and security in their respective regions as well as their contribution to world peace and security, drawing fully on their experiences and advantages in addressing issues in their respective regions under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

We support the establishment of the basic principles underlying this partnership, which should ensure that the United Nations plays a leading role. In their cooperation efforts, the actors involved should bring into full play their comparative strengths, complement each other's efforts rather than duplicate them, and reinforce rather than compete with each other.

Regional organizations should, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, submit timely and comprehensive reports to the Security Council on relevant activities they have undertaken.

Secondly, it is important to promote a results-oriented cooperation. The United Nations should cooperate with regional organizations based on their comparative strengths and unique characteristics in such areas as confidence-building, conflict prevention, crisis management and peacekeeping. Such cooperation should be flexible and varied and should not be confined to a particular modality or mechanism. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission marks a new phase in the work of the United Nations in this area. We support the active participation of relevant regional organizations in that Commission.

Thirdly, it is important to strengthen capacity-building. Enhancing crisis-response capacity at the regional level is the best way to end or prevent conflicts. In that respect, regional organizations of developing countries are playing an increasingly important role. The United Nations should place greater emphasis on its cooperation with such organizations and provide them with assistance and policy incentives in terms of institution-building, information exchange and funding. China calls on the United Nations, as well as on countries and regional organizations that are in a position to do so, to provide greater assistance to the African Union in the area of capacity-building, so that the African Union can play a greater role in maintaining peace and stability in Africa.

The President: I shall now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Ján Kubiš, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovakia.

Mr. Kubiš (Slovakia): It is indeed a great honour for me to address the Security Council today for the first time in my capacity as Foreign Minister of Slovakia. It was not too long ago that I was sitting here at similar events behind another name plate, when I represented the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as its Secretary-General, and before that, as the Special Representative of Secretary-General Kofi Annan and head of one of the peacekeeping operations.

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate the Greek presidency of the Security Council for the excellent concept paper that further develops this important topic. I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of Romania when it served on the Council, which resulted in the unanimous adoption of resolution 1631 (2005) during the Romanian Council presidency in October of last year.

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered later today by my Finnish colleague on behalf of the European Union. Therefore, I will limit myself to just a few comments from our perspective.

As a member of the European Union, NATO, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, and at the same time serving as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Slovakia realizes how important it is that our joint efforts and endeavours are well prepared, synchronized and coordinated. We fully share the Secretary-General's vision of a regional-global security partnership. On the practical level, we welcome the launching of working groups in 2004 and of the standing committee in 2005.

Calls for mechanisms that would provide for a more flexible, effective and regular flow of topical information between the United Nations and regional organizations are not new. The goal is to establish efficient partnerships that would be based on proven comparative advantages of each organization involved in conflict prevention and peacekeeping. In fact, this line of thinking is fully compatible with the two major challenges in cooperation identified by the Secretary-General: clarification of roles, and assistance in building the capacity of partner organizations.

United Nations cooperation with regional organizations is of particular importance and value in the conflict areas that the Security Council tackles on an everyday basis. These days, that applies especially to Africa, and notably to the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, which has become the United Nation's major partner in mediation, conflict resolution and promotion of peace and security on the African continent. An important role is often also played by subregional organizations, for example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This engagement represents one of the most efficient embodiments of the idea of local ownership. Moreover, we fully agree that yet more of our attention and efforts needs to be focused on further assisting Africa in building its own capacities in areas such as early warning, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and crisis management. Also, the ten-year capacity-building plan for the African Union, envisaged in the Summit Outcome Document, deserves our urgent attention.

The most pressing current African security and humanitarian crisis — the Darfur catastrophe — has highlighted the importance of such cooperation. Close cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, whose work we highly commend, as well as between the United Nations and other regional organizations, has been essential. Let me emphasize here the important meeting between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council that was held in Addis Ababa during the most recent Security Council mission to Africa. Such cooperation plays a major role in confidence-building and in guaranteeing sustainable solutions — all in the best interest of the Sudanese people.

We also highly commend the constructive role that the relevant regional organizations — in particular, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference — have been playing in actively engaging with the Sudanese Government in relation to obtaining its consent for the necessary transition from the African Union Mission in Sudan to a United Nations-led operation.

Regional and intergovernmental organizations also have an important role to play in combating terrorism and in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. With respect to the 1540 Committee, which deals with the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Slovakia, as Chair of the Committee, very much counts on cooperation with regional organizations, especially in areas such as facilitating reporting and assisting States to implement national legislative and regulatory measures to prevent

the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials.

Active participation on the part of relevant regional and subregional organizations was essential for the success of the recent United Nations regional seminar on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) held in Beijing. That will also be the case for two other regional seminars, to be held in Ghana and in Peru later this year. Consultations are underway for the OSCE to hold a 1540 workshop in Vienna. Many of these activities would not be possible without the constructive involvement of regional organizations, including their financial contributions.

We have also noted with satisfaction that many regional and intergovernmental organizations have expressed their readiness to work closely with the newly established Peacebuilding Commission, which we think may substantially enhance the Commission's effectiveness and help it become a truly result-oriented body, especially when dealing with individual cases and situations.

Recently, in our work to enhance the Security Council's working methods, we have agreed to further strengthen the Council's interactions with regional and subregional organizations and make them more systematic and more frequent. Such efforts — which, among other things, strengthen Security Council legitimacy — have always enjoyed Slovakia's full support, and we will continue working hard on early and full implementation of all such measures.

In conclusion, let me once again reiterate that while the role of regional organizations in peace operations has been growing, their capacities for sustainable operations are often limited, particularly in developing regions of the world. Therefore, Slovakia supports efforts to build capacity for peacekeeping, peacebuilding or crisis-support operations, including financing mechanisms, both in the United Nations and in regional organizations. That involves both capacity-building for operations and steps and measures that would ensure their success after the operations have been withdrawn.

As a part of these efforts, Slovakia would like to draw attention to a particularly important component of peacebuilding activities that to a large extent determines their sustainable success — security sector reform. Slovakia has made this topic its specific thematic priority during our membership in the Security Council and plans to organize a series of round tables that should eventually contribute to developing a comprehensive policy framework for security sector reform. As a part of this effort, we plan to organize a special round table with regional organizations in December in New York. In our opinion, all that should lead to a thematic debate during our presidency of the Security Council early next year.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Philippe Douste-Blazy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France.

Mr. Douste-Blazy (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Greece for organizing this meeting on a subject that has taken on growing importance for the Security Council recently. I would also like to underline the presence of the Secretary-General in order to pay tribute to his efforts in strengthening cooperation between his institution, the United Nations, and regional organizations.

As we all know, most of the crises that the Council takes up have been the focus of increasingly active involvement by regional organizations both at the political level and on the ground, with a growing diversity of modalities. This involvement is, in most cases, an essential condition for the success of our action. I am thinking first, as a European, of the growing affirmation of the European Union as a major actor in the service of peace, as witnessed by its commitment in the field in Bosnia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, its active involvement alongside other actors in the peace efforts in the Middle East or Darfur, and our support for action carried out by other regional organizations. I am also thinking of Africa, where regional and subregional integration efforts by the countries of the continent elicit respect and admiration.

Operating under extremely difficult conditions, the soldiers of the African Union Mission in the Sudan — to whom I wish to pay tribute — are in the front line in Darfur. In Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, action by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was decisive in stopping the fighting. Finally, the political institutions of the African Union, the Peace and Security Council and the African Union Commission, are emerging as indispensable instruments for peace in Africa.

In the light of those developments, I believe that several lessons can be identified for the Council. The first relates to the continued development of relations between the Security Council and regional organizations as the latter assert themselves as key actors for peace. It is now common for the Council, in most of the crises that come before it, to hear the leaders of the regional organizations involved; close contacts and operational cooperation are developing at all levels between the United Nations and those organizations. That is a very positive development.

The second lesson relates to the complementarity that develops almost naturally, in the spirit of the Charter, between Security Council action and that of regional organizations. The Council needs the specific expertise of those organizations and their intimate knowledge of situations and, especially, of people. For their part, regional actors cannot envision sustainable and legitimate action without Security Council support and without the authority and experience of the United Nations.

Thus, the question is how we can go further and strengthen that interaction, which is so necessary for international peace and security. First, I believe that the Council must continue to encourage efforts towards regional and subregional integration, which are far from having achieved the same level of progress in all parts of the world. To be sure, the impetus for this can come only from the countries and regions concerned, but it is in our collective interest to support and assist their efforts through action by all who can make a contribution. Here I am thinking of Member States, organizations — I have already discussed the European Union role in that regard — and the Secretariat.

In particular, I have in mind the necessary continuation of regional capacity-building, particularly in regard to peacekeeping. Through its national programmes and with the full cooperation of its European partners, France is fully resolved on that issue. I am thinking also of the increasingly diverse and innovative forms of cooperation that have begun in the field to strengthen our actions mutually: the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in support of the United Nations; and the reinforcement, recently decided upon by the Council, of United Nations support to the African Union operation in Darfur.

Beyond that, it seems to me important that we draw lessons from the growing diversity of interventions in the field by regional organizations and the specific skills they have acquired in certain areas: the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in strengthening the rule of law; the Organization of American States and the European Union, in organizing electoral processes; and the European Union again, in armed forces and police reform, for example.

Let us encourage the exchange of experience and expertise on those issues among such organizations, and with the United Nations; where we can, let us define best practices and common procedures; and let us take care to ensure greater synergy and better coordination among the actors in the increasingly complex and multidimensional peacekeeping operations we are mounting.

That last point brings me, finally, to the Peacebuilding Commission. When the Secretary-General proposed establishing that body, all States understood the value of such a forum for enhancing the effectiveness of international action in post-conflict situations. Now, our common responsibility as Security Council members is to do everything possible to ensure the success of the Commission in the mission that our heads of State or Government have assigned to it.

I want to emphasize the magnitude of the stakes for our Council and, beyond that, for the United Nations, because, in the final analysis, our action will be judged by our capacity to resolve, in a lasting way, the crises referred to us. It is precisely in that spirit that the Commission was established. France therefore hopes that it will quickly get down to work on specific situations. My country will offer it every support.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Per Stig Moeller, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

Mr. Moeller (Denmark): Let me first express my gratitude to you, my colleague Dora Bakoyannis, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for submitting his report (S/2006/590) and in particular, for the very useful and practical recommendations it contains. I associate myself with the statement to be delivered later by the Under-Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to highlight two areas — both reflected in the draft presidential statement — which need further and timely attention: the need for further involvement of African organizations in peace efforts, and the fight against terrorism.

We welcome the continued efforts to strengthen cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and African subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The value of cooperation has already been demonstrated in the conflicts in the Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. At the same time, those conflicts have clearly shown that a much stronger partnership between the United Nations and African organizations is of vital importance.

The goal should be real impact on the ground. To that end, we need efficient partnerships and a practical division of labour between organizations involved in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict stabilization. While the Peacebuilding Commission is designated to have the overall coordinating responsibility for the international response to peacebuilding, the African Union and the subregional organizations are in a unique position to mobilize African resources to assist nations on the African continent.

I therefore encourage the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to explore how to best support efforts to develop the African security architecture, and to work closely with the African Union and the subregional organizations on issues such as conflict preparedness, planning and capacity-building. Denmark, as members know, is also actively contributing to those efforts through our substantial bilateral assistance to African organizations — the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) — as well as through the European Union. Denmark provides, through its African Programme for Peace, $40 million for capacity-building.

On the second point, Denmark firmly believes that regional organizations can play a particularly important role in the fight against terrorism. Increasingly, regional organizations are developing their own agendas in that field. As Chair of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee, Denmark particularly welcomes that trend. Regional organizations have a key role to play in ensuring that action against terrorism is taken across a region. It is crucial that we support that important work.

Politically, regional organizations can help solidify the global consensus by condemning terrorism in all its forms consistently, clearly and vocally. Such an unambiguous message is essential to help eliminate any remaining suggestion that terrorism in some form could be acceptable, because it never is. On the technical level, regional organizations can help member States implement their international obligations. As the Council has noted on several occasions, many States are willing to do more in the fight against terrorism but lack the capacity to do so. Regional organizations can disseminate information, provide and facilitate assistance and support the development of regional and national capacities.

I should like to end on a positive note. Improved cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a work in progress. Today, we have significant practical experience to build on. With the overall goal of enhancing international peace and security and ensuring real impact on the ground, Denmark remains committed to support concrete initiatives to further improve cooperation in the future.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jorge Taiana, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. Taiana (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, let me congratulate you and your delegation, Madam President, for taking the initiative to hold an open debate on a partnership with regional organizations. I also express my Government's satisfaction for the presence of the distinguished representatives of regional and subregional organizations, and the Secretary-General.

Over the past 15 years, there have been initiatives aimed at establishing a partnership between the United Nations and the regional organizations. They include high-level meetings under the leadership of the Secretary-General, adoption of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005) and publication of the Secretary-General's report on a regional-global security partnership: challenges and opportunities (S/2006/590). We have seen the strengthening of operational cooperation between the United Nations and the associated organizations in the areas of peacekeeping and international security. This

cooperation has covered conflict prevention, where we consider ensuring respect for human rights in all its aspects to be a basic tenet of our foreign policy.

In the recent past, most of the conflicts on the Security Council's agenda have essentially been the result of civil wars, often caused by political dictatorships, blatant violations of human rights, religious and ethnic persecution and economic exclusion.

Quite often, internal conflicts have expanded to whole regions. For this reason, we support the creation of a regional capacity for the protection of human rights through strong institutions. We share the Secretary-General's strategic vision that building institutional capacity is one of the goals of the partnership with regional organizations as a tool for preventing conflicts.

Today more the ever, the regional organizations must play a major role both in the prevention and solution of conflicts and in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Close geographical proximity and close historical and cultural ties among their members give the regional organizations comparative advantages for better understanding the root causes of regional conflicts and finding peaceful solutions to these problems.

Recent United Nations peacekeeping operations have taken place in close cooperation with regional, subregional and intergovernmental organizations. An example in Latin America is the case of Haiti, where the Organization of American States (OAS) has entered into a strategic partnership with the United Nations, facilitating the fulfilment of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) through the leadership and experience accumulated during voter registration. That has been essential for the free and fair elections that led to the current democratic Government of Haiti.

The Charter of the United Nations confers primary responsibility for peacekeeping and international security on the Security Council. Chapter VIII of the Charter specifies the role of regional organizations for resolving conflicts. The recently created Peacebuilding Commission should be incorporated into this framework. That could contribute to increased coordination among regional organizations and the United Nations through the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, thus creating in the post-conflict phase synergies that would help construct the basis of a cooperation which, by taking advantage of existing complementary elements, would avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

Systematic cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, with a clear distribution of functions and appropriate capacities, will increase the effectiveness of the international community in preventing conflicts, allow them to respond rapidly when conflict breaks out and provide solutions for a lasting peace. To that end, as the Secretary-General has suggested in his recent report, balanced distribution of capacities and resources is needed in all regions, so that the knowledge of regional organizations may be used, in the event of conflict, under the legitimate authority of the Security Council.

At the same time, given the existing link between security, peace and development, we believe that the specialized knowledge of regional organizations, whose original mandates were focused on promoting economic integration and trade, may also be useful for guaranteeing the success of strategies for economic growth and stability.

The Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit stressed strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. In order to accelerate this process, it will be necessary not only to eliminate discrepancies between the capacities of the subregional, regional and global organizations, but also partner organizations must define themselves in terms of the Charter provisions under which they operate.

In conclusion, we would like to express our support for the draft presidential declaration presented by the delegation of Greece, which, together with implementation of resolution 1631 (2005) and the current debate, may engender solutions for the operational problems identified by the Secretary-General in his report of 28 July so that strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations may help us to deal with the new challenges and threats of our age.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Establishing collective approaches necessary for effectively overcoming today's threats and challenges requires that we consistently increase the cooperation of the United Nations and the Security Council with regional and subregional organizations. This cooperation is established in the Outcome Document of the 2005 Summit and must be based on Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

The United Nations and the regional organizations must harmoniously complement one another, objectively using their comparative advantages. For the United Nations, this means its universal membership and sphere of activities, its globally acknowledged legitimacy. In turn, the regional organizations have the best knowledge of the situation in their areas of operation and are often better equipped with their own sources of financing. A clear division of labour in maintaining the prerogatives of the United Nations and the Security Council will allow us to increase the international community's ability to counter crises.

An important part of the partnership of the United Nations with regional organizations is peacekeeping in the broadest sense: the elimination of crises, their settlement, post-conflict activities and peacebuilding. We believe in the need to increase the experience of positive cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional partners in Africa, including the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. Russia is contributing to the training of African peacekeepers and will expand this contribution.

An important role in finding solutions to many of the problems in these regions will be played by the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of American States and other Latin American organizations.

We would also like to see further development of interaction between the United Nations and structures such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Community and NATO, where mechanisms to react to crises are being established. Of course, in this regard we must fully respect the Security Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace, including approving the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

Russia is continuing to assist in intensifying cooperation, first of all in the area of peacemaking, between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). As is known, in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, for example, under almost critical conditions, the CIS peacekeeping forces, in close contact with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, are supporting security and stability.

Russia is also providing support in the context of peacemaking operations in South Ossetia and Transdniestria, where the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is participating in the talks. We believe that those conflicts can be resolved if all the parties conscientiously observe existing agreements. Any attempt to settle the conflicts by breaking with the established mechanisms would prove to be very risky and counterproductive.

There are also substantive prospects for the developing cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Intensive work is being carried out in this context to establish our own peacemaking capabilities, which could contribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The establishment of relations between the CSTO, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime opens up particular opportunities for cooperation in those areas.

It would also be useful to ensure cooperation between the CSTO and NATO in fighting the drug threat in Afghanistan. We hope that NATO will respond to the proposals made in that regard two years ago; that would move us some way forward, at least.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is playing an increasingly important role in ensuring stability and security in the Euro-Asian region. Its members have called for the development of interaction with the United Nations in a number of topical areas, including counter-terrorism, the illicit traffic in drugs and post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Russia currently holds the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Council and the

Arctic Council. We are therefore very much aware of the work of those organizations, and believe that they could cooperate with the United Nations. That would help to promote what we are doing.

We believe it is urgent to hold regular meetings between the Secretary-General and the leadership of regional organizations. The agenda of United Nations cooperation with regional partners is becoming increasingly broad and diverse. To peacemaking and peacebuilding challenges, we have now added countering the spread of weapons of mass destruction and illicit flows of small arms and light weapons, resolving other destabilizing cross-border problems and fighting the illicit drug trade and organized crime.

We hope that the today's discussion will enable us to move forward in implementing the 2005 World Summit Outcome and step up the process of improving multidimensional cooperation with regional organizations by strengthening collective security throughout the world on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations.

Once again, I would like to thank you, Madam, and the Greek delegation, for having prepared the draft presidential statement that we will be adopting later.

The President: I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Antonio García Belaunde, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru.

Mr. García Belaunde (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, for your very skilful stewardship in the Security Council presidency this month, and to thank you for having taken this initiative to bring us together to consider cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, as well as other intergovernmental bodies, in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security.

The legal framework set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter has acquired particular importance since the end of the cold war. Indeed, over the past 15 years the Security Council has been incorporating into its tasks and mandates joint actions with international regional and subregional organizations. The fact that the majority of the 16 current peacekeeping operations involve the participation of regional organizations shows how strong that new relationship is. Resolution 1631 (2005) reflects that evolution and provides us with a useful inventory on the basis of which we can expand and reinforce areas of cooperation.

We believe that the international system is currently characterized by both globalization and fragmentation, and that the interaction of those two phenomena has called into question governance within many States. Peru is aware of that reality, which is why we have accorded priority to the fight against marginalization and exclusion, which affects the stability of the international system and, in the final analysis, international collective security itself. That particular dynamic means that States must adopt modern approaches that make it possible to ensure democratic governance internally and, from an external perspective, contribute to regional stability.

In that respect, international, regional and subregional organizations are called upon to play a special role in the way that conflicts are prevented, dealt with, and resolved. Their capacities for dealing with structural problems, providing information, analysis and crisis management and carrying out peace operations and institutional and material reconstruction must be utilized and, in many cases, strengthened.

In this context, it is important for regional authorities to develop the own mechanisms. For example, we have established the Andean Zone of Peace, which seeks to resolve subregional conflicts in a peaceful manner and effectively prohibits nuclear, chemical, biological and toxin weapons and antipersonnel landmines. Peru also encouraged the establishment of the South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation with a view to building trust and ensuring an ongoing dialogue on security and defence aimed at the gradual reduction of arms acquisitions.

One good example of the potential of the joint approach can be seen in the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. That is a typical peacekeeping operation, carried out in compliance with a Security Council mandate, and which thus has legitimacy that the United Nations Charter grants to the Blue Helmits for those tasks. It is also evidence of the capacity of the countries of the region to administer that United Nations mandate through regional bodies such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Community and the Rio Group, which is a mechanism for political consultation and dialogue.

In the case of Haiti, the OAS has played an important role at the institutional level, and we believe

that the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional and subregional organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank should join that effort and help to promote an international environment that reinforces stability, supports development projects that expand production, facilitates trade, generates jobs and makes viable the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons.

The Rio Group, for its part, since the establishment of its military presence, has made it possible to coordinate the peacekeeping effort. That has not only made a significant contribution to restoring peace in Haiti, but it has also made possible the development of the joint working capacity of the armed forces of the region. It has thus become a mechanism for confidence-building that opens new prospects for military cooperation and promotes mutual knowledge and understanding.

The General Assembly and the Security Council have given the Peacebuilding Commission comprehensive responsibility for the post-conflict phase. I would like to stress, however, that regional and subregional organizations for integration and economic development must be involved so as to help define political objectives and priority areas for reconstruction.

Here, we believe that multinational entities, grouped together, for example, in the Global Compact, should also be involved to contribute economic, social and political viability to the rebuilding efforts carried out by the nationals of each country and by the international community.

In conclusion, I would like to say that regional and subregional mechanisms must cooperate with each other and undertake multilateral activities at the global level so as to strengthen the purposes and principles of United Nations, with due attention given to the needs of each particular region.

Peru expresses its support for the draft presidential statement to be adopted at the end of this debate.

The President: I now call on Her Excellency Mrs. Asha-Rose Mtengeti Migiro, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mrs. Migiro (United Republic of Tanzania): Tanzania pays tribute to you, Madam President, and to your delegation for having organized this important debate. Regional organizations play a vital role in maintaining peace and stability in their respective regions. We therefore welcome the presence of representatives of regional organizations at this meeting to give us their perspective from the field.

The United Nations has a long history of collaboration with regional organizations. That history of collaboration has enabled regional organizations to become increasingly involved in brokering peace agreements, in conflict resolution and in peacekeeping. In a number of countries — including, recently, the Sudan — they have played a useful role complementary to the efforts made by the Security Council. They are indispensable partners in maintaining regional and international peace and security. But, even with those positive developments, more is required.

Tanzania believes that an institutionalized approach and mechanism will make possible a shift from the present fragile arrangements to a more substantive and regularized cooperation. That is central to the needs of both the United Nations and regional organizations in the fulfilment of their common responsibilities for maintaining peace and in the prevention of armed conflict.

The challenge, as we see it, lies in devising practical arrangements for strengthening the relationship between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations in keeping with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. In that regard, the African Union has done a tremendous job under very difficult circumstances, both in brokering the Darfur Peace Agreement and in monitoring the N'Djamena Ceasefire Agreement.

As the primary United Nations organ responsible for peace and security, the Security Council has the power and the prerogative to advance cooperation with regional and intergovernmental organizations to a higher level so as to make it more effective and responsive to challenges that threaten international peace and security.

The African Union, in the context of the African Union Mission in the Sudan, has demonstrated the advantages offered by a regional organization: physical proximity to the conflict and a greater understanding of the dynamics. We believe that the African Union, in this case, stands to benefit from a formalized

arrangement with the United Nations in developing the institutional and operational capacity of the African Union Peace and Security Council, in the training of civilian and military personnel, and in the exchange of information, early-warning systems, communication and capacity-building at both the peacekeeping and the peacebuilding stages.

We are very mindful of the benefits that regional organizations have gained through cooperation with other regional and intergovernmental organizations. The European Union, for instance, has helped Africa to establish the African Peace Facility, while the Group of Eight provides direct bilateral assistance to the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to mention them. That kind of cooperation should continue alongside that between the United Nations and regional organizations.

In conclusion, I believe that our debate today should result in a firm resolve to translate our determination to institutionalize cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations into concrete and sustainable action. The Security Council must enable the United Nations to effectively implement that resolve. Finally, my delegation wishes to support the draft presidential statement, we thank the Greek delegation for having prepared it.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Kim Howells, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Howells (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement to be made later by the Under-Secretary of State of Finland on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Today's debate is an important opportunity to focus on strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and regional, subregional and intergovernmental organizations. I thank you, Madam President, for your foresight in convening it.

The United Nations is a uniquely legitimate and indispensable global body. But it cannot operate in isolation. The demands on the United Nations, particularly in the area of peacekeeping, expand continually. In many areas, it is only by working closely with its regional and international partners that the United Nations can effectively deliver to those most in need.

That applies more widely, too, across the international community's response to the critical challenges we face, including terrorism and proliferation, poverty, climate change, and the protection and promotion of human rights. The United Kingdom therefore welcomes the Security Council's commitment, expressed in the statement to be adopted today, to expand cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. That will strengthen the Council's ability to respond to conflict through prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction.

Nowhere is that more necessary than in Darfur. The African Union (AU) peacekeeping force — the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) — has done an outstanding job in very difficult circumstances. It should now be allowed to share that burden with the United Nations and with the wider international community. It is unreasonable to expect any single regional organization to maintain the level of force needed in Darfur for long periods. The AU itself has recognized, over many months, the need for a transition to the United Nations. The Council endorsed that conclusion again through resolution 1706 (2006), agreeing to provide AMIS with support and to reinforce it, with the aim of taking over by the end of this year.

We cannot understand why the Government of Sudan, while accepting a United Nations force on almost identical terms in the south of the country, is turning its back on United Nations help in the west of Sudan. We very much hope that contacts in New York this week will help President Al-Bashir to understand that our goal is to help the Sudan. But equally, we cannot stand idly by if the Sudan pursues a military solution of its own in Darfur. The Council will need to act to support the AU and to shoulder its own responsibilities. But we hope that such a crisis can yet be averted.

As we know, the European Union has also developed its role in international peace and security since the launch of the European Security and Defence Policy by the United Kingdom and France almost 10 years ago. We welcome the increasing role played by regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention efforts, as outlined by the Secretary-General

in his recent progress report on the prevention of armed conflict. The League of Arab States has an important role to play as we aim to reinvigorate the Middle East peace process. We also welcome the increasingly close relations between the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The three organizations have common aims and purposes. By working together, they can enhance one another's contributions to the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and their response to security challenges.

But now we need to build stronger relationships between the United Nations and regional organizations. In particular, we need to identify the relative strengths of each and to build up their expertise and capacity. Full implementation of resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1653 (2006), on African peacekeeping, should be a high priority both for the United Nations and for Member States.

The EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the OSCE and the United Nations continue to cooperate closely. Darfur is a clear example of the EU, NATO and the United Nations all working together to provide support on the ground. We expect similarly valuable cooperation among the EU, NATO and the OSCE in Kosovo, where the EU plans to have a mission operating alongside NATO.

I would use today's debate to invite the Secretary-General to reflect on whether the United Nations can bring together those regional organizations most closely engaged across the conflict cycle — particularly the EU and the AU — to develop genuine operational partnerships in order to strengthen their crucial cooperation.

Greater informal coordination would help us to ensure that the international community engages on security sector reform, on demobilization, on developing capable security forces under democratic control and, across the spectrum of conflict, all essential elements to achieve sustainable peace and development.

The activities of the human rights bodies and actors of the United Nations complement and build on work in the field of human rights by relevant regional organizations.

We are also pleased that several regional organizations were able to present their valuable experiences of internal review mechanisms at informal consultations in Geneva earlier this month on the Human Rights Council's new universal periodic review.

The establishment of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission at last year's World Summit was a major achievement, bringing together development, security and diplomatic expertise to take a holistic approach to peacebuilding. The Commission brings together for the first time in a formal grouping Member States, international financial institutions, regional and development organizations to help secure lasting peace and rebuild countries ravaged by conflict. The Commission has many challenges ahead, and the support and cooperation of regional organizations will be critical to its success.

This is all positive. But the challenge today and in the future is not just to continue this effort, but to enhance and expand it. What is needed is targeted capacity-building of regional organizations. Practical, real-time opportunities to work together should be identified. The Security Council's recent commitment to enhance cooperation with regional organizations should be put into practice. By doing so, the United Nations and its regional and international partners have a better chance of achieving our strategic objectives.

As a proud member of the European Union, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Commonwealth, NATO, the G-8 and, above all else, the United Nations, the United Kingdom is committed to continuing this effort. If there are agreed aims and purposes, common objectives, shared resources and mutual understanding, then no matter how difficult the situation, no matter how difficult the issue, the international community can tackle the problem head on with confidence and conviction.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Basile Ikouebe, Permanent Representative of the Congo and representative of the Chairman of the African Union.

Mr. Ikouebe (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, your counterpart, Minister Rodolphe Adada, was getting ready to take part in today's debate, but he has been detained elsewhere for a meeting the contents of which concern our debate because it is a summit meeting of the African Union's Peace and Security

Council on Darfur. Therefore, he has asked me to deliver the following statement:

"Madam President, Greece has assumed the presidency of the Security Council for this month with great skill and dexterity, and we see proof of this in the organization of the current meeting to which you have invited the African Union (AU).

"I am especially grateful that you have proposed for discussion at this meeting a very significant theme for Africa in particular — that is, challenges of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and other intergovernmental bodies in maintaining international peace and security.

"My country has assumed the responsibilities of Chairman of the African Union and, therefore, we are increasingly aware of the need and the importance of such cooperation, which, in some cases, takes the form of a true partnership, such as in Darfur or in Côte d'Ivoire.

"I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the excellent report he has just submitted to us. We strongly support the content of this report.

"This debate fits into the approach that was outlined in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit and stresses the importance of strengthening relationships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as indicated in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

"There is a need, then, to integrate these new tools of cooperation with a view to greater effectiveness and proximity in order to meet real needs in the area of peace, security and development.

"In this respect, the relevance of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005), the first of its kind, adopted on 17 October 2005, is abundantly clear. It advocates regular meetings with regional and subregional organizations in order to strengthen cooperation with these organizations in maintaining international peace and security, ensuring if possible that such meetings coincide with high-level meetings held with the heads of regional and other intergovernmental organizations. We are pleased to see that this intention is again taking shape today.

"Therefore, we have the heavy responsibility of designing a world order that must respond to a common vision and use complementarities and comparative advantages in a clear division of labour. We agree with the Secretary-General when he says that implementing such a vision will not be easy. In fact, if we refer to Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter as a basis for operational cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, we have to recognize the important role that regional organizations can play in the area of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, disarmament, non-proliferation, the protection of civilians and natural disasters.

"I will now mention a few of these areas. First of all, with respect to conflict prevention, even though it is basically the prerogative of Member States, we are pleased to note that the African Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union, for example, all have a conflict prevention centre with an early warning system. Likewise, thanks to the help of the United Nations, Central Africa has a subregional centre for human rights and democracy in Yaoundé, Cameroon, which helps to promote respect for human rights, mitigate injustices and prevent conflicts in the region. This mechanism fits perfectly into the framework defined by the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

"We agree with the Secretary-General that regional and subregional organizations could do more in this area, but, unfortunately, they have to face logistical, financial and human-resource difficulties and therefore must continue to rely also on international cooperation.

"When it comes to peacemaking, we have also acknowledged that regional and subregional organizations have an important role to play. Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in this area manifested itself through, for example, the dispatch of mediators, envoys and special representatives with respect to Burundi, the inter-Congolese dialogue, the international conference on the Great Lakes region and the talks on Darfur.

"As regards peacekeeping, the African Union has set up collective mechanisms, such as the Council for Peace and Security, which is meeting at the present time. Subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States could also benefit from the fulfilling experience. We would like to reaffirm our commitment to a strengthened partnership between the United Nations and the African Union for the management of the crisis in Darfur. Africa believes that the transition to a United Nations force fits perfectly into the logic that has prevailed in this type of situation until now. We will not say any more at this stage. We will await the conclusions of the meeting that is under way.

"Furthermore, we must point out that, in order to strengthen its capacity for intervention through standby arrangements, the African Union has called for the establishment of five brigades of 3,500 to 5,000 men by the year 2010. The international community should support that initiative, which would set an example for other theatres of operation.

"Peacebuilding has a very clear regional dimension. We are convinced that regional and subregional organizations that are partners of the United Nations, as well as financial institutions, can play a major role in establishing an integrated and coordinated approach in that area. That is one of the missions that has been entrusted to the recently established Peacebuilding Commission and in which Africa places great hope.

"The challenges we must address in today's debate involve defining the role and determining the nature of the United Nations partner organizations that intervene in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that respect, we share the views of the Secretary-General, who proposes that the Security Council study the question of the scope of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations and assess the extent to which they choose to identify themselves either as regional organizations acting under Chapter VIII of the Charter or as intergovernmental organizations acting under other provisions.

"After determining their nature and capacity for action, it would be possible to define their operational scope of action, whereby we would determine the role of each organization. Thus, in order to avoid confusion in this area, we must ask international, regional and subregional organizations that would wish to contribute to strengthening cooperation with the United Nations to conclude a formal agreement with the Secretary-General in response to the appeal launched by the heads of State at the 2005 summit.

"In conclusion, with respect once again to Africa, we warmly welcome resolution 1625 (2005) on strengthening the effectiveness of the Council's role in conflict prevention, in particular in Africa. As current Chairman of the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, Congo fully appreciates the importance of such an instrument.

"Lastly, my delegation fully supports the draft presidential statement patiently negotiated and submitted by the President's delegation."

The President: I give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Jackie Wolcott Sanders, the alternative representative of the United States of America.

Ms. Sanders (United States of America): We welcome the presence here of you, Sir, and your Foreign Minister to preside over the Council's debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

This topic is timely and of growing importance as the agenda of this Council grows ever longer and the issues of peace and security grow more complex. We share your interest in exploring ways to enhance that coordination and burden-sharing as part of our continuing joint efforts to identify efficient and effective methods to help international peace and security. We welcome in particular the opportunity that today's debate represents to review cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, as well as ways to increase the impact of such cooperation on advancing Security Council objectives.

The activities of regional organizations, when properly planned and capably implemented, can strengthen and reinforce a variety of critically important objectives, such as the resolution of conflict

and the maintenance of peace, promoting democracy and human rights, strengthening international security cooperation, countering terrorism and transnational crime, and even supporting economic development.

Regional organizations can bring unique and important connections, knowledge and experience to any effort to address problems and conflicts in their regions. A cooperative multilateral approach between the appropriate United Nations organs and the appropriate regional organizations has the potential to create valuable synergies and to significantly increase the probability of successful interventions. Enhanced cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations can be valuable especially when they share lessons learned and information about peacekeeping missions.

We should encourage the Security Council and the Secretariat to consult with appropriate regional actors when necessary, to exchange information and to search for ways to better utilize their expertise in conflict resolution and prevention. However, we believe in general that this should be informal and should not detract from the important relationship among the Member States within the United Nations. We must be careful about imposing any requirements that would limit our ability in a time of crisis.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Kenzo Oshima, the Permanent Representative of Japan.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): Allow me first to convey the regrets of my Foreign Minister, Mr. Aso, to the President, the Foreign Minister of Greece, and ministers present at not being able himself to participate in today's meeting due to important party events back home.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Greece for its initiative to convene this open debate today. We are fortunate to have the Foreign Minister of Greece presiding in person over this important meeting.

We also welcome the participation in the debate of the representatives of important regional organizations.

The role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security has indeed been growing, and the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has become an essential factor in that regard.

Although the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, have been playing the central role in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, complementary measures by regional organizations have become increasingly substantive. The involvement of regional organizations, with their intimate knowledge of local conditions, resources, expertise, and regional ownership in the efforts for peace and security, is a clear advantage and serves as a key factor in conflict resolution and the subsequent peacebuilding process.

There is also a need for the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies to strengthen their cooperation with a variety of organizations having wide-ranging networks in implementing Security Council resolutions. From those points of view, too, cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations is essential. In that regard, I wish to touch upon a few areas.

First, the role played by regional organizations in addressing conflicts has produced some tangible results, which can already be seen in the activities of the African Union and the European Union, as manifested, for example, in the activities of the African Mission in Burundi, the African Union Mission in Sudan and the European Union Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is our view that cooperation to facilitate the rapid deployment of peacekeepers will enable us to cope with conflicts with greater speed and efficiency. There are various options available for the enhancement of such capacities — for example, through possible arrangements between the United Nations and regional organizations or their member countries — under which the United Nations would more efficiently provide, with the assistance of the donor community, training, equipment and other capacity-building assistance to the troops of regional organizations or their member countries. Although such capacity-building assistance has already been provided through bilateral and G-8 frameworks, if we could systematize assistance already provided by some donor countries in this field, thus assuring a stronger link between those activities and the United Nations, efficiency would be dramatically increased.

Secondly, an important aspect of the role played by regional organizations in peacebuilding lies in

encouraging regional ownership of the post-conflict process. Japan supports the participation of regional organizations in the Peacebuilding Commission and welcomes the active involvement of relevant regional organizations, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States, in the country-specific meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone and Burundi.

Thirdly, there is a need for enhanced dialogue between those organizations and the Security Council. Japan has offered two proposals as specific measures to facilitate closer cooperation between the Council and regional organizations. The first is that, when they are visiting on Security Council missions, representatives of the Council should arrange to meet with representatives of regional organizations. The second is that more opportunities should be made available for representatives of regional organizations to brief the Security Council on their activities.

With regard to the first proposal, we welcome the very first meeting between a Security Council mission and the AU Peace and Security Council, which was held in Addis Ababa during the mission's visit to the Sudan and Chad in June. Concerning the second proposal, we were pleased to learn that opportunities for regional organizations to brief the Security Council are steadily increasing, as exemplified by the briefing by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development on the situation in Somalia that is planned for later in September.

In order to enhance the implementation of Security Council resolutions, the Council and its subsidiary bodies should establish cooperation with a wide range of organizations. We value the fact that subsidiary bodies of the Council, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), are seeking to strengthen their cooperation, not only with regional organizations such as the AU, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, the Organization of American States, the EU, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, but also with other international organizations, including the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Customs Organization and the International Criminal Police Organization.

Japan pays high tribute to the African Union for its many efforts aimed at conflict prevention and conflict resolution as an expression of African ownership, including the highly commendable efforts of AMIS in Darfur. In order to support those efforts, Japan has provided various forms of assistance to promote the capacity-building of the African Union and its operations. We will continue that support as appropriate.

Finally, we would like to thank the delegation of Greece for its preparation of the draft presidential statement, which we support. Japan will support existing and new initiatives aimed at strengthening cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Nana Effah-Apenteng, Permanent Representative of Ghana.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, I wish to apologize to Her Excellency Ms. Dora Bakoyannis, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, for the inability of my minister to be here due to the meeting on Darfur of the African Union Peace and Security Council. My minister really wanted to be here personally, which is why he asked for Ghana's speaking position to be changed from fifth to last. In his absence, I have the honour to read out his statement on his behalf.

> "I congratulate the Foreign Minister of Greece and the other members of the Greek delegation on Greece's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September, and wish them every success in their term of office. Our gratitude also goes to all Council members for their cooperation and support during Ghana's presidency in the month of August, which had to grapple with the difficult situations in Lebanon and the Sudan.
>
> "Lately, we have observed some worrying trends in the relations between the United Nations and some African countries. We therefore welcome the opportunity to revisit the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional entities, in order to determine how best we can meet immediate and longer-term challenges.

"Certainly, effective cooperation between the United Nations and regional entities such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the promotion of peace and security can be achieved only if those regional bodies use their leverage with member States to further our shared objectives. We believe regional entities have an obligation to strengthen the hand of the United Nations in peacemaking by ensuring, among other things, that international peace efforts are not obstructed.

"Indisputably, it has been the unwavering commitment of ECOWAS to peace and its determination to work with the United Nations that has made the collaboration of the two entities so productive, especially in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The difference between token gestures of cooperation and the meaningful regional-global security partnership envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter is clear for all to see. In stark contrast to that is the lack of cooperation shown by a few member States of the AU, which could unravel the Union's role in the regional-global security partnership.

"In that connection, it is our expectation that the restrictions imposed on the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea will soon be lifted. Similarly, the expansion of the United Nations presence already in southern Sudan into Darfur is a must, if the lives of millions of displaced persons are to be saved.

"Last month, at the end of the open debate initiated by Ghana on the subject of peace consolidation in West Africa (see S/PV.5509), the consensus in the Council was for an enhancement of the highly productive cooperation that we have witnessed between the United Nations and ECOWAS in stabilizing our region after years of conflict. We commend the Council for the important initiatives it has undertaken in recent years to enhance cooperation with the AU and ECOWAS. In particular, we appreciate the work of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the West African Subregion, comprising representatives of various departments in the Secretariat and the specialized agencies, as well as the efforts of the United Nations Office for West Africa, under its leader Mr. Ahmed Ould Abdallah, in forging a close working relationship between the world body and its regional counterpart while highlighting the importance of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to peacemaking.

"We expect from those contacts the development of a workable framework for further cooperation, especially in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report (S/2000/809) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, led by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi in 2000. As the report rightly notes, both AU and ECOWAS are very enthusiastic about regionally-led peacekeeping operations but have weaknesses in their planning and management capabilities, which are aggravated by inadequate financial resources.

"We support the proposals for cooperation in the development of the required capacity in those areas, in addition to others such as the coordinated use of logistics sites, co-listing of African standby forces' capacities in the United Nations standby arrangements system, organizing staff exchanges between their respective headquarters, sharing lessons learned and planning expertise and improving the use of early-warning and analytical information in Africa as well as harmonizing training and teaching materials.

"At the same time, we must take into account the other practical recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2006/590) on the regional-global security partnership and related challenges and opportunities. The report was the outcome of six high-level meetings held between 1994 and 2005. Of particular interest to us is the current United Nations desk-to-desk consultations with the European Union, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. That model could be adapted and used to enhance dialogue between the United Nations and both the AU and ECOWAS on conflict prevention.

"Additionally, we could work together with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations to further implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and

Light Weapons in All Its Aspects through the promotion of technical assistance and international cooperation programmes. Effective use must be made of the practical lessons learned from decades of experience in peacemaking, as has been demanded by the Security Council in various resolutions and presidential statements.

"We also intend to contribute towards the elaboration of a general statement of principles, as proposed in the Secretary-General's report, which could provide a guiding mechanism for future collaboration with and between all signatories and the United Nations.

"One area of concern pertains to the need to strengthen coordination between the AU and regional organizations, most of which are only in their formative stages and therefore lack well-developed institutions. We also acknowledge the need for the various regional entities, within their regions, to rationalize their activities in order to avoid wasteful duplication of effort.

"The best guarantee of peace and security for all nations in the world today is a credible multilateral system organized around the principles and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Over the years, the United Nations has invested sizeable resources in an endeavour to create strong partnerships with various regional bodies, in order to make use of their unique advantages. We appreciate the supportive role of NATO, the European Union and several other intergovernmental bodies. We believe that behind all those efforts there can be no higher objective for the regional-global security partnership we are building than working together to extend to most of mankind the rights and basic protections guaranteed by the Charter.

"Ghana, under the leadership of President of the Republic, His Excellency General John Agyekum Kufuor, is of the firm conviction that, ultimately, the attainment of that happy state in West Africa will be a function of twin simultaneous developments — democratic popular empowerment and rapid economic growth — so that, in this generation, mass poverty can be eradicated in West Africa, which would enable the West African peoples to join in the ever-broadening movement for global progress and prosperity in conditions of greater security and peace. That is the path on which the West African people want to travel. The world community, as a matter of our common humanity, should give maximum support to that determination."

Finally, Mr. President, my delegation supports the draft presidential statement that your delegation has prepared.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Markus Lyra, Under-Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, to take the floor on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Lyra: My Foreign Minister truly wanted to be here today, but he is now attending a meeting of the Quartet on the Middle East peace process.

I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

Let me first thank the presidency of the Security Council for organizing this timely meeting. At the 2005 world summit, the United Nations membership agreed on supporting a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter. One of the European Union's priorities for the sixty-first session of the General Assembly is to support the development of cooperation between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations as a way to strengthen effective multilateralism. We see this as an area with potential; such cooperation has already yielded results.

The cooperation among the European Union, the United Nations and the African Union is a good example of how these efforts can lead to concrete achievements. Capacity-building to enhance the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations is also addressed in the excellent discussion paper by the Greek presidency of the Security Council (S/2006/719, annex), and the EU is ready to discuss its recommendations.

We welcome the emphasis on the increased responsibility of regional organizations for and ownership of efforts to solve regional conflicts. At the same time, it is important that this take place in framework of the United Nations and with the Security Council's support, and that universal principles such as the rule of law, human rights and peacebuilding be respected.

It is useful for us to be together here today to exchange views on the way forward. I would, however, also like to add a word of caution. We should look for results, and we should be careful to avoid creating additional structures. I fully agree with the Secretary-General that the establishment of a more effective partnership should be based the comparative advantage of each organization. We should also be careful not to force a uniform framework on organizations that are very different from one another.

It can be useful to provide conceptual clarification on the role of the organizations participating in this framework. The Capacity Survey by the United Nations University clearly shows the vast discrepancy in the working areas, roles and capacities of the organizations taking part in this partnership. While fully supporting efforts to enhance capacity-building, in particular of the African Union and of African subregional organizations, the European Union agrees with the Secretary-General that we should not adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. What counts are the results. The EU considers that flexibility, light structures and, first of all, pragmatism should be the guidelines for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

The report of Secretary-General (S/2006/590) identifies a number of areas for strengthened cooperation, in particular conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and disarmament and non-proliferation. These are all areas where the European Union is active and cooperates with the United Nations. I will address these issues in further detail in our statement at the seventh high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations, on 22 September. In the context of today's meeting, I will rather explain the philosophy behind the European Union's cooperation with the United Nations and give a concrete example of how this is translated into action, in particular in the area of crisis management.

The European Union considers that its relations with the United Nations are one of the cornerstones of its external action. As stated in the European Security Strategy of 2003, one of the EU's central priorities is strengthening the United Nations and equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively. The European Union is itself a structure for peace and security in its region. The EU was created to overcome the legacy of two world wars and to prevent new wars in Europe. The founding idea of the European Union is to create a zone of peace and prosperity based on the voluntary pooling of sovereignty, common institutions and the rule of law. The EU emphasizes the same values in wider international relations. Building on its own experience, the European Union is an active proponent of effective multilateralism.

The EU's commitment to support the United Nations has been reaffirmed on many occasions, both in important statements, including at the level of heads of State or Government, and through action. Relations between the European Union and the United Nations have been intensified in recent years. I would like in particular to highlight the EU-United Nations cooperation in crisis management. This began to develop at a time when the United Nations was looking at the reform of its peace operations in the framework of the process of the report (S/2000/809) of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, which coincided with the laying of the foundations of the European Security and Defence Policy. The United Nations, confronted with the changing nature of peacekeeping, sought increased support from regional actors.

Two operations under the European Security and Defence Policy, in 2003, were real and successful tests of the EU-United Nations relationship. The EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina took over from the United Nations International Police Task Force. And the EU-led Operation Artemis, carried out in the summer of 2003 in accordance with Security Council resolution 1484 (2003), succeeded in stabilizing the security conditions, improving the humanitarian situation and protecting the civilian population in Bunia, in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Those examples of cooperation on the ground constituted a major breakthrough in relations between the two organizations. A framework for consultations between the two organizations was set up by the Joint

Declaration on United Nations-EU Cooperation in Crisis Management, of September 2003, which identified four areas for further cooperation: planning, training, communication and best practices. A consultative mechanism, the Steering Committee, was set up in order to enhance coordination in those areas between the United Nations — in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs — and the EU staff.

Since the beginning of 2003, the EU has engaged in more than a dozen military or civilian operations, most of them in close cooperation with the United Nations. The new relationship with the United Nations has undoubtedly also stimulated the European Union's efforts at improving its crisis management capacity, and it has developed into very fruitful cooperation. I will not go into details on technical cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union, but will just briefly draw attention to a recent achievement: the European Union has deployed a military operation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the deployment to Kinshasa of an advance element of several hundred military personnel and a battalion-sized force over the horizon, quickly deployable if necessary.

The United Nations and the European Union have also cooperated constructively in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as regards election observation. The deployment of some 300 EU observers occurred with the full logistical support of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and the EU Election Observation Mission's security arrangements enabled it to request assistance by MONUC where required throughout the EU Mission's period of deployment.

Another recent development is the EU's role in the efforts to ensure a swift implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). At the extraordinary meeting of the Council of the European Union on 25 August, the EU Foreign Ministers had an exchange of views with Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the situation in Lebanon. The Council welcomed the elements provided by Mr. Annan on the operational framework of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The significant overall contribution of the EU member States, becoming the backbone of UNIFIL, demonstrates that the European Union lives up to its responsibilities.

A further area of cooperation that I would like to emphasize, as the Secretary-General has in his report, is conflict prevention. Indeed, since 2003 a regular geographical desk-to-desk dialogue has been taking place between the EU and the United Nations on conflict prevention.

Let me mention the newly established Peacebuilding Commission, which is now becoming operational. The Commission will have a central role in the United Nations system in the definition of peacebuilding strategies for countries emerging from conflict and in enhancing coordination. Close cooperation with regional organizations and the involvement of civil society in peacebuilding will be important for the Commission's success. The relevant regional organizations should be involved in accordance with their working areas, roles and capacities. As a leading global player in peacebuilding and a major provider of funds to this effect, the European Union is committed to fully and actively contribute to the work of the Commission from the beginning.

I will conclude by stating that it is a priority for the European Union to continue to deepen and broaden its cooperation with the United Nations, both in the areas I have indicated and in many others.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. José Miguel Insulza, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, to take the floor.

Mr. Insulza (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful for this opportunity to address the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations for the maintenance of peace and security.

I should say first that the Organization of American States (OAS) shares and fully supports the Secretary-General's initiative for a regional and global strategic partnership in this area. It cannot be any other way, given that the OAS is an organization with political purposes, composed of 35 States that are Members of the United Nations. As a result, the ideas, challenges and opportunities that often confront us are similar, principally in the development and solution of crisis situations and in governance and development.

Therefore, on the basis of Security Council resolution 1631 (2005), which affirmed the need for important steps to develop cooperation between our

organizations, we have been participating actively in the standing committee as well as in other activities in that area. We share the idea, mentioned here on several occasions, regarding the need to move from a simple policy of consultation to a much clearer regulation of operational activities between us. We hope to be able to contribute to that with our efforts and also with our specific experiences, especially experience over the last year with respect to our work in conjunction with the United Nations.

The most relevant of those experiences certainly has been our cooperation with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), through the special OAS mission in that country, in restoring the democratic system. We jointly assumed the task of cooperating with the provisional Government of Haiti in carrying out democratic elections. We had a very suitable distribution of work. With the Government, the OAS developed an electoral register with 3.5 million voters. With the logistical support of MINUSTAH and the United Nations, we conducted the most democratic and participatory elections that have ever taken place in the history of that country.

With respect to cooperation between our regional organization and the United Nations, I believe our experience in Haiti makes it possible for us to confront the challenges we still have in that country — which is in the process of transition — to continue to support together the Government of René Preval in the full democratization and national reconstruction and peacemaking in the country, and to share experiences to promote future cooperation with institutions. That cooperation has made it possible for the forces of several countries that are members of the OAS and of the United Nations to participate in MINUSTAH. Latin Americans have thus clearly begun a much greater involvement in the resolution of their own conflicts. In our opinion, that should be the new form of cooperation among us in the future.

I believe our other experiences have also been positive, such as the dialogue we have had in other crises in the region — in Ecuador, and in Bolivia. We have shown that we can dialogue and work together. However, experience has also shown that we should have had prior consultations, before a parallel involvement in those countries, which are members of our organization. We believe that it is much better that we prevent crises together, that we dialogue together, that we have common policies, and then we carry out, as in Haiti, a proper division of functions and competencies so that our action will be as effective as possible.

I believe we have experience in this area. For example, we have cooperated significantly with the organizations of the system, such as with the International Labour Organization in preparing the most recent summit in the Argentine Republic, in Mar del Plata. We worked together in electoral observations missions; we have ongoing cooperation with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which for all practical purposes is also part of the inter-American system as well as of the United Nations. The Human Development Reports of the United Nations Development Programme have also been a fundamental instrument, alongside policies of our countries, which the OAS has also sponsored.

We have to be able to coordinate all this in future, as we said here, pragmatically and flexibly but also in a more stable fashion. We have to find ways to institutionalize our cooperation — not through bodies, not through establishing new institutions, but with permanent norms that would show us, in the case of each institution, in which areas we can carry out clear and effective cooperation. We believe regional organizations can provide better commitment and a clearer vision, greater political and cultural knowledge, in conflicts taking place within their geographic area. That cooperation will enable United Nations action to be more effective in defending peace and security.

The President: I now invite Mr. Lauro Baja, Chairman of the New York Committee of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to take the floor.

Mr. Baja: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalem, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, the Philippines.

ASEAN congratulates the Greek presidency on its excellent stewardship of the Council in September, and you, Madam President, for continuing the Council's discussion of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in a public meeting.

ASEAN continues to fully support the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, and in developing friendly relations among nations and international cooperation in solving international problems. Over the past four decades, ASEAN has concluded several initiatives which have significantly contributed to peace, security and stability in the region. These include the declaration of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in South-East Asia, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN+3 — ASEAN plus China, Japan and Korea — process, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and regional actions undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations with regard to Cambodia and Timor-Leste.

ASEAN is currently engaged in bringing ASEAN's political and security cooperation to a higher plane under the ASEAN Security Community, which is the third pillar of the organization's objective of establishing an ASEAN Community by 2020. The ASEAN Security Community aims to ensure that countries in the region live at peace with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment. The ASEAN Security Community would also strengthen ASEAN's capacity to deal with traditional and non-traditional security challenges.

ASEAN's efforts towards that end recently received a major boost with the accession by Australia, China, India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Russia to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. ASEAN expects more countries to accede in the next few months. Those developments constitute significant support for the Treaty as a code of conduct governing inter-State relations in the region.

Fighting terrorism and other transnational crime is another priority area for cooperation among ASEAN member countries. ASEAN has issued joint declarations with Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia and the United States on cooperation in counter-terrorism and on combating transnational crime.

The ASEAN Regional Forum, as the primary forum on peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region, is moving beyond confidence-building measures towards preventive diplomacy. ASEAN, as a driving force of the Forum, has expanded contacts with various international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to exchange experiences and best practices in promoting peace and security. In fact, several United Nations agencies and entities, such as the International Maritime Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs have participated in Forum activities.

ASEAN cooperation with the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security was highlighted during the first ASEAN-United Nations Summit, held in Bangkok in 2000, when ASEAN leaders and the United Nations Secretary-General called for closer cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations in activities such as exchanging information and organizing conferences on issues relating to peacebuilding.

That cooperation was further strengthened with the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 57/35 in 2002 and 59/5 in 2004. Both resolutions encouraged the two organizations to further increase contacts and strengthen areas of cooperation. With the assistance and support of the Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme, a series of seminars on peacebuilding in South-East Asia has been conducted in ASEAN member countries. ASEAN hopes there will be more activities to that end.

ASEAN-United Nations cooperation reached another milestone last year with the convening of the second ASEAN-United Nations Summit at United Nations Headquarters. The Summit agreed on the need to further broaden ASEAN-United Nations cooperation, with the involvement of the various United Nations specialized agencies, to encompass all areas related to community-building, including key issues on development, in particular poverty eradication and the Millennium Development Goals, prevention and control of infectious diseases, disaster management, trade and investment, and peace and security.

ASEAN believes that regional organizations should not only maintain but also explore and expand

contacts and relations with various countries and regional and international organizations in pursuit of peace. Aside from its 11 dialogue partners, ASEAN maintains interregional consultations with Latin America through the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation and the Rio Group, with Europe through the Asia-Europe Meeting process, with the Gulf Cooperation Council, with the Economic Cooperation Organization and with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Cooperation among regional organizations themselves should therefore be encouraged. A good opportunity occurs annually during the annual sessions of the General Assembly, when bilateral meetings between regional organizations can be organized on the fringes of the session. ASEAN has developed its own tradition of meeting at the ministerial level with other regional organizations during General Assembly sessions.

Different regional organizations have different levels of capacity, mandates and resources. In order to assess their potential to contribute to the United Nations efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security, the comparative advantages of the regional organizations should be determined. In that regard, a region-to-region study may need to be carried out in order to identify how each regional organization could individually cooperate with the United Nations to achieve our goals.

We believe the debate in today's public meeting on this issue is timely and relevant, and we hope that the various ideas generated here will further enhance United Nations cooperation with regional organizations.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States, to take the floor.

Mr. Mahmassani (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to address the Council on behalf of Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

The League of Arab States welcomes the opportunity to participate in this important meeting to discuss the challenges facing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security. I am especially grateful to the delegation of Greece for the discussion paper (S/2006/719, annex) it prepared to guide the debate.

I wish to make a number of points on the item on the Council's agenda. First, peacekeeping and the maintenance of international peace and security constitute the fundamental pillar of the Security Council's mandate. Here, the Council is facing significant challenges with respect to a world situation marked by tension. The Security Council, the United Nations and regional organizations thus have an additional burden to bear as they confront difficult issues that can be dealt with only through close partnership among them all.

Secondly, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is defined in Chapter VIII of the Charter. However, international circumstances demonstrate that that relationship needs to be re-examined in the light of changing circumstances. On the one hand, the number of traditional conflicts and regional problems is increasing, yet, on the other hand, conflicts of other types are occurring, we cannot neglect their impact on international peace and security. Indeed, this demands an increased role for the Security Council and other United Nations bodies and for regional organizations.

Thirdly, regional organizations continue to develop new ways and means to address the growing number of problems and conflicts, in particular with regard to peacekeeping. That is not sufficient, however, because the institutional and legal frameworks are not always adequate. They can be adequate only if the role of these organizations in peacekeeping is enhanced, in particular through cooperation between regional organizations and the Security Council in the areas of training, capacity-building and financing. We are seeing proof of that in Darfur.

Fourthly, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security cannot occur without the restructuring and reform of the United Nations and its institutions. It was my honour to participate in the high-level group that was instructed by the Secretary-General to examine this matter. We believe that the recommendations made with respect to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations could assist us in following the road to international peace and security.

Fifthly, balance between United Nations bodies and their operations under the Charter is an essential principle for reform. In recognizing that, the Security Council assumes the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. At the same time, we should acknowledge that the success of the Economic and Social Council, as well as of the Human Rights Council and other United Nations bodies that operate in the field of development and that implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations, must have a positive impact in order to create an environment conducive to bringing about international peace and security. Therefore, we need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in all areas — economic, social, human rights and the status of women — for more effective maintenance of international peace and security and for producing more tangible results.

Sixthly, Security Council reform must be carried out. I have two suggestions. First, the Council must be reinvigorated and enlarged on the basis of longer and renewable mandates for the Council members. That would enable the Council to have a larger role on the international and regional levels. Secondly, the Council must be reinvigorated with respect to the large ongoing conflicts, particularly between the West and Islam. Such conflicts are not only a clash of cultures and civilizations but also political conflicts that have repercussions on international peace and security. That has caused a number of wars, invasions, violence and terrorism. I do not think, therefore, that they can be resolved only through a dialogue among civilizations but through a comprehensive and responsible treatment, including political aspects, under the auspices and oversight of the Security Council.

I do not need to tell you, Madam President, that the United Nations and the Arab League were established at the same time. The Arab League has been the regional twin of the United Nations since their inception in 1945, and they have since faced the same difficulties and challenges. The Arab League has developed its tools and now has a Peace and Security Council, among other instruments. It invites involvement from different people in its work, becoming a more transparent organization. We are convinced that cooperation between the Arab League and the United Nations, as well as the other regional organizations — first and foremost the African Union, the European Union and the Organization of American States — will help us to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, a goal all Arab countries and the international community urgently seek.

Finally, in order for the Security Council to maintain its credibility and effectiveness, we call on it to deal with the threats that confront international peace and security with the necessary speed and neutrality. We see that the Council deals with questions that are very sensitive. However, there are other matters that are more sensitive that need to be dealt with more quickly than some of the less serious matters. So we are reminded of the standards that the Council uses in maintaining international peace and security. The Council's credibility would be undermined and its role and that of the United Nations and regional organizations would be diminished.

The Arab League has made an appeal for a Council meeting tomorrow to reinvigorate the peace process and to stop the deterioration of the political and security situation in the region, which could threaten international peace and security. The world could witness the way in which the Council deals with an extremely serious matter, such as that of the Middle East. Will the Council hesitate, or will it assume its responsibilities? I am confident that under your presidency, Madam, the Security Council will be responsible and serious in dealing with this matter.

The President: I invite His Excellency Mr. Karel de Gucht, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, to take the floor.

Mr. De Gucht (*spoke in French*): At the beginning of this year I had an opportunity to present to the Council the highlights of the programme of the Belgian chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). I would like to thank you, Madam, President, for the opportunity to take the floor again today in this very important forum.

I am very pleased with the evolution of the dialogue between the Security Council and regional organizations. This dialogue is particularly useful in strengthening the global security system. Indeed, the security challenges that we all face require consolidated and coordinated action.

(*spoke in English*)

The OSCE is the world's largest and most inclusive regional organization under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Its core mandate is to

promote security through cooperation. This is, and should be, a matter of constant attention, continued investment and common responsibility for us as it is for the United Nations. We have built a body of commitments, norms and principles, which bind us together, which we share with the international community, and which guide us in our actions.

There can be no lasting peace and security without respect for democracy, civil liberties and human rights. Conversely, effective and lasting democratic rule is predicated upon stability. There will also be no lasting stability without economic development. That is why we should attach great importance to each and every one of the three dimensions of the comprehensive approach to security that both our organizations share.

The OSCE Permanent Council adopted a declaration on cooperation with the United Nations last March, in response to recent calls from the latter to further strengthen cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, in particular resolution 1631 (2005) and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General.

(*spoke in French*)

In this regard, I am particularly pleased with the productive cooperation with the United Nations in many fields of activity of the OSCE. Thus, the stress that we have placed on the fight against organized crime has made it possible to strengthen our cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and to use the OSCE framework to promote the ratification of the 2002 United Nations Convention on Transnational Crime. This effort has also made it possible to provide specific support to the implementation of this Convention by the participating States of the OSCE.

In the area of transportation, a priority theme this year in the economic sphere, the Belgian chairmanship cooperates closely with the United Nations High Representative for Landlocked Developing Countries and supports the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action approved in Almaty in 2003. I would also like to draw attention to the enhanced cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in implementing legal instruments and norms for the latter.

(*spoke in English*)

Some activities of the OSCE result directly from various Security Council resolutions, for instance in Kosovo and in Georgia. In addition, the OSCE assists in the implementation of Security Council resolutions, for example in the area of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Through these activities, as well as through the transmission of data, evaluations and analyses, the OSCE can provide information and assistance to the Security Council.

We look forward to further developing that cooperation in other fields, for instance, in conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation, where the OSCE has proved its added value through the work of its specialized institutions and 18 field missions in 16 countries.

Regarding the so-called protracted conflicts in Georgia-South Ossetia, Nagorny Karabakh and Moldova-Transdniestra, the OSCE offers its good offices to the parties to prevent escalation and to create the right conditions for a peaceful settlement. Naturally, although the ultimate responsibility for finding solutions lies with the parties themselves, the OSCE and its Chairman-in-Office will avail themselves of every opportunity to move the peace processes in those conflicts forward and to assist the parties in reaching a solution.

I should also like to underline the OSCE's strong record in the field of human rights, including protecting minorities, preserving freedom of the media, promoting tolerance and furthering democracy. The High Commissioner on National Minorities, for example, is the organization's main tool for identifying ethnic tensions between and within member States.

Furthermore, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has an important role not only in election monitoring but also in assisting countries in furthering democratic development and human rights.

The OSCE's Forum for Security and Cooperation acts as the keeper of disarmament treaties and confidence-building measures. Since 2002, the annual Security Review Conference has grown into a comprehensive forum for security dialogue within the OSCE area. Through its regular contacts and meetings with Asian and Mediterranean partners for cooperation, the OSCE also encourages the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures. It is also engaged in capacity-building activities related to out-

of-region organizations, such as the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It is ready to continue and expand the sharing of its experience with interested organizations.

(*spoke in French*)

In assuming the chairmanship of the OCSE, Belgium wanted to clearly show its commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation. Promoting close cooperation between our two organizations is an integral part of that commitment.

On behalf of the OSCE, I have the honour of reaffirming our support for that partnership.

The President: I invite His Excellency Mr. Vladimir B. Rushaylo, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, to take the floor.

Mr. Rushaylo (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I should like to express my appreciation to the Security Council for the invitation to participate in this meeting on regional organizations.

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is actively participating in this process. We deem this initiative extremely important and timely, given that the important objective of such forums is to strengthen and fine-tune the capacities of the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The 2005 world summit opened the way for further work in that area. World leaders supported the idea of strengthening ties between the United Nations and regional organizations and decided to involve the relevant regional organizations in the work of the Security Council.

At its meeting last year with the heads of regional organizations, the Security Council adopted resolution 1631 (2005), by which the Council emphasized the potential role of regional organizations in addressing issues related to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, notes the efforts made in the fight against terrorism, and urges all relevant regional organizations to enhance the effectiveness of their counter-terrorism efforts.

Small arms and light weapons in the hands of terrorists and various criminal groups is an extremely dangerous factor that promotes destabilization, leading to conflict situations involving open armed resistance.

Important means of combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons include the universal United Nations Convention against Transnational and Organized Crime; the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition; and the United Nations Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

In the framework of the implementation of those instruments, the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States on 19 September 2003 took a decision on the means of supervision of international transfers of "Igla" and "Strela" type portable Zenithal-rocket complexes by CIS Member States, which stipulates that there must be an exchange of information in all cases involving the transfer and acquisition of Zenithal-rocket complexes on the basis of the bilateral and multilateral agreements that have been concluded.

The CIS countries are currently working on a draft statement on the combat against the illicit trade in weapons, which will give concrete expression to the measures contained in the Programme of Action, to be implemented at the regional level.

Terrorism is among the most dangerous challenges facing the world. In 1999 we signed a cooperation agreement on counter-terrorism among the CIS countries that forms the legal basis for the relevant CIS bodies to implement various measures that will help them identify, suppress and investigate acts of terrorism.

In 2000, the first programme of the member States of the CIS was adopted to fight terrorism, which will require major efforts on the part of CIS countries aimed at eliminating this scourge. At the same time, CIS States have stepped up their efforts to accede to the 12 counter-terrorism conventions of the United Nations to combat international terrorism and to implement the relevant provisions contained in our legislation.

The summit of CIS heads of State held in September 2004 considered the issue of further developments in cooperation among CIS countries aimed at countering terrorism and any other current threats and challenges to peace and stability in the light of the agreements reached within the framework of the CIS, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations. Following their

discussions, the heads of State of the CIS countries adopted a declaration whereby they proposed the convening of a special meeting of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee with international organizations and CIS countries, which was held on 26 and 27 January 2005 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The cooperative programme among the CIS countries aimed at fighting international terrorism and any other forms and manifestations of extremism was reaffirmed for the 2005-2007 period as well. That programme calls for, inter alia, developing cooperation with international organizations in this area.

The implementation of those universal and regional treaties and programmes and the stepping up of efforts to fight terrorism will contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The CIS has consistently been and remains open to cooperating with the United Nations and regional organizations in countering existing threats and challenges.

The President: I invite Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to take the floor.

Mr. Ihsanoglu: It gives me great pleasure to address this unique and much-needed meeting on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which encompasses 57 countries.

We are grateful to the Foreign Minister of Greece for having taken the initiative of bringing us together to exchange views on the very important subject of international peace and security.

I should like also to highlight the importance of the ideas contained in the letter dated 6 September prepared by the Permanent Representative of Greece, and I would like to highlight the paragraph concerning the importance of revising the use of the terminology concerning regional and subregional organizations.

I would like also to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for the excellent report before us.

Today, as we try from an analytical perspective to understand the problems of the world, of which quite a number involve the Muslim world, we see that those problems continue to worsen and that the scope of the crises is widening. It seems that the monodimensional approach to tackling crises is leading to further complexities. When problems are approached solely from the angle of security and solutions are sought only through military means, those problems cannot be solved in a lasting and comprehensive manner. On the contrary, they become harder to solve. Short cuts and short-term solutions further complicate the problems and increase their vehemence.

Therefore, if we support the effective, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of crises, the need arises for a paradigm shift in our approaches. That requires us to understand that political grievances, backwardness, the underdeveloped situation of societies and their need for good governance are the underlying reasons for the problems we are trying to solve.

When we are resolved to act to settle disputes and conflicts; when sound measures are taken by the international community by upholding respect for international legitimacy; and when we focus on long-term prospects with patience and wisdom instead of resorting to the logic of intervention, we will move towards a more stable, secure and developed world where cooperation and dialogue win out over unilateralism and division.

For its part, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in cooperation with the international community, is promoting moderation, modernization and development within the Islamic world. Also, with a new emphasis on development issues, it is aligning its 10-year programme of action, which was adopted at the last OIC extraordinary summit in Mecca in December 2005, with the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations. The programme of action includes the OIC's proactive involvement in all stages of conflict management, as well as combating international terrorism. I am pleased to inform the Council that the OIC has taken several initiatives related to various conflict situations, including in Iraq, Somalia, the Sudan, Palestine, Lebanon and elsewhere.

In the field of development and peacebuilding, the OIC and its specialized organ, the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), are playing an active and constructive role in various places. The OIC and IDB can closely coordinate with the recently established United Nations Peacebuilding Commission in achieving common objectives, starting particularly in Sierra Leone, where the OIC Trust Fund for

Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Assistance, as well as the IDB, are actively undertaking numerous projects. The OIC stands ready to further cooperate with the United Nations and all other international, intergovernmental, regional and transnational organizations with a view to making the maximum possible contribution to world peace and security.

I should like to emphasize here the importance of the political engagement in and support of the world's leaders for dialogue, mutual recognition, respect and cooperation among the representatives of cultures, civilizations and religions, as that issue has gained in importance recently due to its implications for and repercussions on international peace and security.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the need to reinvigorate the time-tested doctrine of multilateralism to promote international peace and security. It is only through cooperation on an equal, equitable and just basis that the objectives of international peace and security, as well as of social and economic development, can be achieved.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to take the floor.

Mr. De Hoop Scheffer: I thank you first of all, Sir, for your very good initiative and for your invitation to participate in this important debate.

Let me make some comments about cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and other intergovernmental bodies from a NATO perspective.

It goes without saying that NATO nations are deeply committed to the United Nations. In the Treaty of Washington, which founded NATO, the allies reaffirmed their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and acknowledged the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. Consequently, NATO has already made and, indeed, continues to make a significant contribution, in particular by leading operations under a United Nations mandate.

NATO's experiences of cooperation with the United Nations include the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, defusing the crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, stabilizing the situation in Kosovo, providing security and assistance in Afghanistan, training and equipping the security forces in Iraq, providing humanitarian assistance in Pakistan, and assisting with training and logistical support both the United Nations and the African Union in the Sudan.

Drawing on those experiences, NATO has learned valuable lessons about its own structures, procedures and capabilities, which we are now addressing. But NATO has also learned some important lessons that, I believe, have wider relevance, in particular to cooperation with the United Nations, as well as with other regional organizations and intergovernmental bodies.

First of all, it is clear that each organization has different strengths and that these need to be complemented and mutually reinforced. NATO offers unparalleled military experience and capability, yet addressing a conflict requires a coordinated and coherent approach from the outset. Clearly defined responsibilities regarding the political, military, economic, development cooperation and other challenges of a conflict are indispensable if we are to maximize our chances of success.

I saw for myself only two weeks ago in Afghanistan how important that lesson is. NATO, through its International Security Assistance Force, is certainly a key enabler in that country, but the military contribution to stabilizing that country is not an end in itself. If we wish to prevent Afghanistan from falling back under Taliban rule and exporting fanatical terrorism, then all actors with an interest in the well-being of that country need to reinvigorate their efforts to create a strong and sustainable Afghanistan.

(spoke in French)

My second observation concerns the role of Member States. We often forget this, but our organizations' ability to act depends directly on the political involvement of nations and the will to contribute — in the case of NATO, financially and militarily — to conflict management. In the framework of our respective organizations, we therefore need to recall the importance of striking a balance between collective political will and the means provided us by nations.

Thirdly, there is a need to find a just balance between the responsibilities of the various international

actors and those of local actors. That balance is, of course, a function of the type of conflict, but I also feel that the international organizations have an interest in promoting, as speedily and as fully as possible, the appropriation of the peace, stabilization and reconstruction processes by the people and authorities of the countries in question. Substitution is sometimes indispensable, unfortunately, but it must not be seen as an easy way out, lest it undermine the final objective of timely disengagement.

My final comment is that we need to maintain the support of public opinion, without which the political basis of our interventions and the resources we enjoy decline. It is therefore the responsibility of all of our organizations to explain the basis of what is often a long-term commitment. It would be beneficial for us to demonstrate to the general public and to those who finance us an exemplary spirit of cooperation and solidarity among organizations.

I would like to conclude by welcoming the recent establishment of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission. It is an important step towards instituting real teamwork at the international level, and NATO is ready to contribute to its work. The United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, have the primary role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Regional organizations and other intergovernmental bodies have a responsibility to assist. NATO will continue to play its role in that collective effort.

The President: I invite His Excellency Mr. Nikolai Bordyuzha, Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, to take the floor.

Mr. Bordyuzha (*spoke in Russian*): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak at this important and representative forum. We welcome efforts aimed at achieving closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations while maintaining a logical division of labour and preserving the prerogatives of the United Nations and the Security Council.

We fully agree with the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "A regional-global security partnership: challenges and opportunities" (S/2006/590). We are sure that their implementation will enhance our collective potential in the areas of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, disarmament and non-proliferation. We support increased cooperation with regional organizations in resolving conflicts, provided that there is a clear understanding that the Security Council must play the main role in the process, in full conformity with the Charter.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization is taking capacity-building steps in this regard by establishing its own peacekeeping operations, which will contribute to United Nations peace operations. Regional organizations can play an important role in implementing a peacebuilding strategy, including within the Peacebuilding Commission. We support more extensive use of that specialized body within the United Nations system. We also believe that key international organizations must cooperate more closely with regional organizations and play a coordinating role in their respective fields of activity, making practical recommendations, providing information, consulting regional agencies and providing expert and technical assistance.

At the same time, there is a need for closer coordination of efforts between regional organizations, especially between those that carry out similar tasks and functions and operate in the same region. In this regard, I would like to support the Secretary-General's idea of establishing a web-based databank of practices and capacities of regional partner organizations of the United Nations and agencies in the United Nations system in the areas of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. That would help them to more effectively coordinate and avoid duplicating their efforts. Those efforts would also be more effective if regional organizations considered committing themselves to inform the United Nations as soon as the threat of a conflict situation emerged within the area of their responsibility. I propose the establishment of a similar mechanism to coordinate counter-terrorism activities through United Nations bodies.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we are all pursuing the same goal: to make the world more stable and secure. Increasing United Nations cooperation with regional organizations will contribute to the achievement of that goal. There is no other choice for the international community if conflict is to be prevented.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Terry Davis, Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, to take the floor.

Mr. Davis: I should like to begin by thanking the Greek presidency of the Security Council for having organized today's debate.

The contribution of the Council of Europe to maintaining international peace and stability is based on the concept of democratic security. The Council of Europe is reinforcing continent-wide stability across its 46 member States through adherence to democratic values and the acceptance of legal standards, based on respect for human rights and the rule of law. We believe that freedom and security are inseparable and that one cannot exist without the other.

Our concept of democratic security is anchored in a system of legally binding treaties. Compliance with obligations is regularly monitored and, in the case of the European Convention on Human Rights, enforced through the European Court of Human Rights.

When it comes to the fight against terrorism, the Council of Europe has adopted a set of conventions providing for new means to diminish the capacity of terrorists to strike wherever or whenever they choose. These new treaties establish as criminal offences a number of acts which may lead to acts of terrorism, such as incitement, recruitment and training. They also reinforce cooperation in the prevention of terrorism by modifying existing extradition and mutual assistance arrangements between those countries which are parties to the conventions. Finally, these new provisions reinforce the protection and compensation regime for the victims of terrorism.

The foundations of this anti-terrorist policy, namely, measures to prevent the erosion of human rights, are motivated by the same imperative — that is, the protection of our citizens and the citizens of other countries on other continents. The most effective anti-terrorist policy is one which stops more terrorists than it helps to recruit, and this is why our response to terrorism is as fair as it is robust. Our promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue focuses on the root causes of terrorism and completes our threefold approach to this global threat.

That third point also shows that the Council of Europe's contribution to building peace and security is not limited to standard-setting and adopting legal instruments. In addition, we are currently running three campaigns which cover global areas of concern and which are also high on the United Nations agenda for promoting human security.

The Council of Europe has launched a campaign to combat trafficking in human beings. In parallel with that, we have launched a three-year programme for the promotion of children's rights and the protection of children from violence. At the same time, we are running a youth campaign on diversity, human rights and participation, under the slogan "All Different, All Equal". Its objective is to engage people in the effort to eradicate racism, discrimination and intolerance, which unfortunately persist and even flourish in many parts of Europe. In spite of its geographical scope, the message of the campaign is universal.

Post-conflict rehabilitation is another important part of our work. Kosovo is a case in point. The Council of Europe has been working closely with Mr. Martti Ahtisaari and his team in areas such as decentralization, constitutional law, human rights and cultural heritage. Other successful examples of our work are the arrangements with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on the implementation of our Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and with UNMIK and NATO on the implementation of the monitoring mechanisms of our Committee for the Prevention of Torture. Since, whatever its future status, Kosovo will remain a part of Europe, we believe that everyone living there should be protected by the European Convention on Human Rights.

To conclude, I will turn briefly to some of the points raised in section C of the discussion paper (S/2006/719, annex) circulated by the Greek presidency for this meeting.

As regards the general relationship between the United Nations and the Council of Europe and between the United Nations and the many other intergovernmental bodies represented here, I think we all agree that it is the responsibility of the United Nations to maintain peace and security worldwide and that there is an obvious link between regional security and global security.

While I welcome the idea of clarifying the respective roles of various bodies — possibly through framework agreements with the United Nations — I would hope that we could also develop a results-

oriented approach and not waste time and energy on semantic discussions and attempts to categorize organizations that cannot be categorized. We are all unique, with special features reflecting history, geography and mission.

At the end of the day, what really matters is the political will and the ability of each organization to deliver. What is needed is more action, not more words.

The President: Owing to time constraints, His Excellency Mr. Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania, will not be able to deliver his statement in person at this meeting. However, his delegation will submit the statement to be issued as a document of the Security Council.

The Security Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council concerning the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, the statement by the President will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2006/39.

Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all participants in this fruitful joint exercise aimed at strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.